

# Trustees of the Punchard Free School



# Early History

- Benjamin Hanover Punchard was born in Salem Massachusetts on December 16, 1799. He moved to Andover in 1826.
- Mr. Punchard died at his home on High St. on April 4, 1850. The Home at 8 High Street is on the National Registry of Historic Places.
- His will dated January 18, 1849 called for \$50,000 to be given to the Town of Andover, \$40,000 for a permanent fund for the support of a free school and \$10,000 for the necessary buildings. Another \$20,000 to be given to the town on the death of Mrs. Punchard (1873).

# Early History

11/11/1850

Town Meeting warrant article to accept the bequest of Benjamin Punchard. Town meeting voted to refer the subject to a committee of 9, 3 each who are members of South & West Parish, Christ Church.

# 12/15/1850 Special Town Meeting

The committee previously appointed, reported to the town in glowing description of Mr. Punchard and stated his “fortune was gain of honest industry, that its acquisition left no stain upon the justice of its late owner”.

- Recommended the bequest be accepted.
- Also reported that the free school should be a high school, open to children of both sexes.
- A memoir of Mr. Punchard was proposed and approved at the meeting.
- 5 Trustees were selected at town meeting by a vote of 144 meeting attendees. The trustees were to be elected every 3 years at town meeting.

# Work Begins

1851

- The Massachusetts legislature approved the incorporation of the Trustees of the Punchard Free School.
- Over the next 4 years the Trustees would meet almost monthly.

1853

- 8 ¼ acres were purchased (currently location of the Town Offices) for \$2,100.

1856

- A special Act of the State Legislature permitted Andover to substitute Punchard Free School for the high school required by state law in towns of its size.

# Putting the Pieces Together

8/28/56

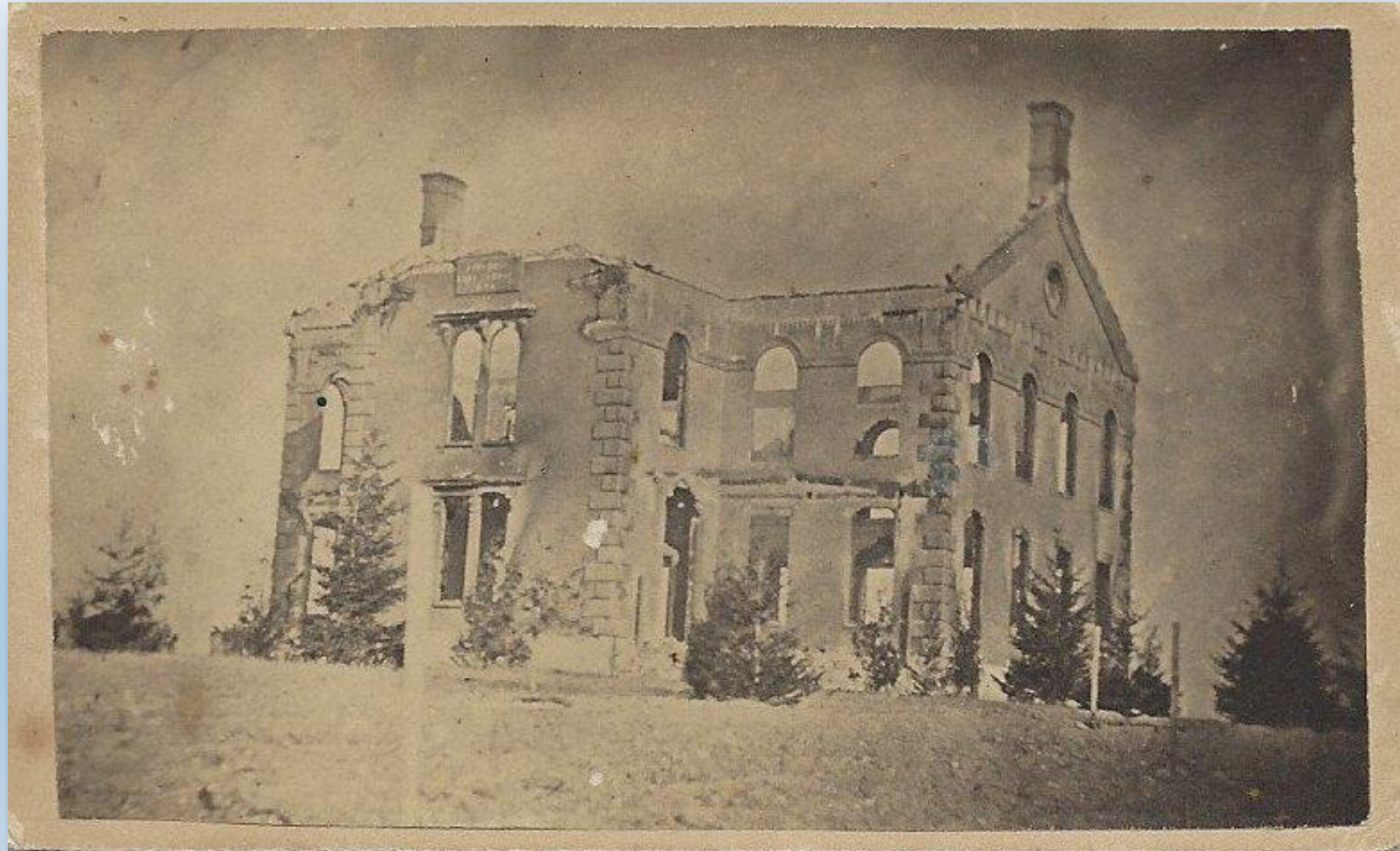
- The Trustees handled all aspects of locating the land for the school, design and constructing the school, establishing the courses, hiring teachers and a principal as well as establishing the character of the school. They also approved all candidates to be admitted.
- Applicants were examined by the principal and trustees to determine eligibility.
- Examination of 117 applicants with 60 accepted (included students from North Andover).

# School Opens

- With the new school building completed a dedication ceremony was held on September 2, 1856 and the Punchard Free School opened on September 3, 1856 with 58 students.
- Punchard Free School was one of the first public schools built and operated with private funds.
- It became a model school to educators.



December 18, 1868





# Rebuilding

1869

- Classes were held in the basement of old town hall.
- Town agrees to fund rebuilding of the school. The cost is \$40,000. The Trustees agree to lease their land to the town rent free. The town erected the building and equipped it. The town leased the property back to the trustees on a perpetual, rent free basis.
- September 1871 – the new building opens to classes.

# Restructuring

1901

- Trustees appointed a committee to confer with the committee of the town appointed at the town's annual meeting to consider relations of the Punchard to the town.
- The Punchard Fund was no longer adequate to maintain a high school such as Andover required.
- Trustees voted to transfer approximately 7 acres of land to the town. Estimated value was \$6,000. Town paid the value to the Punchard Trustees.

# Restructuring Continued

1902

- Town meeting voted to establish Punchard High School a public secondary school
- A merger was soon arranged. The new Punchard High School was to teach the humanities and the Punchard Free School was to take charge of the science, mathematics, and shop courses. There were to be 3 teachers in each school, and the town and trustees would each pay  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the headmaster salary.

# Today Scholarships

The corporation provides support to the students of Andover High School in two ways.

Scholarships to the graduating seniors each spring.

Scholarships are awarded in honor of 14 donors.

Since 2003 scholarships have been awarded for over \$218,000 to 229 students

# Grants

The Trustees accept grant applications from teachers, guidance counselors and the principal of the high school each spring.

Annual meeting is held with the high school principal in review of request.

Since 2003 the Trustees have approved 150 grants for \$242,653.

The endowment stands at over \$740,000 today, after over 170 years of providing benefits to the town's high school and its students.

J.W. Barnard Prize Fund	1898
Thomas Black Memorial Scholarship Fund	1995
Edna G Chapin Scholarship Fund	1931
Fred W. Doyle Scholarship Fund	1975
William G. Goldsmith Prize Speaking Fund	1986
Myron E Gutterson Botany Prize Fund	1942
Andover Grange, Patrons of Husbandry, No 183 Scholarship Fund	1996
Nathan C Hamblin Memorial Scholarship Fund	1996
Margaret F. Hinchcliffe Scholarship Fund	1938
Trustees of the Punchard Free School Scholarship Fund	1989
Andover Servicemen Scholarship Fund	1994
Amy Frances Battles Trow William Albert Trow Educational Fund	1995
Henry Wyatt Achievement Award (Established by Town Employees)	1994
Donald Dunn Fund	





